

Project EASIER Bulletins are a periodic communication tool that provide information and/or reminders about the project. The bulletins are disseminated to superintendents and all identified local district contact persons. If you would like others in your district to receive these bulletins and other information regarding Project EASIER, add them to the EASIER/BEDS/ID Contact Person Application located at <https://www.edinfo.state.ia.us/securelogin.asp>. Bulletins will be placed on the Project EASIER information website for future reference at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/44/310/1/3/>.

Coding Changes and Clarifications

A document has been prepared that provides coding changes and clarifications for current reporting. See Bulletin 8 Attachment: Project EASIER Coding Changes/Clarifications. <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/44/310/1/3/>

Project EASIER Timeline

The deadline for certifying Project EASIER files is October 31. Congratulations to the districts that have already certified their reports!

Project EASIER/Certified Enrollment Connection

There are no changes in how Certified Enrollment is reported this year. However, Project EASIER data will be displayed with the official Certified Enrollment data for some reports so that districts can compare the two sets of data. You are encouraged to review these data and resolve any differences given that plans are to populate appropriate Certified Enrollment reports with Project EASIER data next year.

Iowa Testing Programs Bar Code Labels

It is extremely important that districts use the Bar Code Label extract provided in the local Student Information System (SIS) to obtain these labels from the Iowa Testing Programs. The use of this extract will provide accurate and consistent data for the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports required by No Child Left Behind.

The Department is covering the cost of the labels with the expectation that districts will use the available SIS extracts.

The Department of Education and the Iowa Testing Programs (ITP) are working together on this initiative. One past issue has been how to obtain bar code labels for students that move into buildings after labels have been ordered, but before testing begins. The Iowa Testing Programs has developed a procedure for the submission of partial orders to accommodate this scenario. Following is an informational piece provided by ITP explaining the new procedure.

Iowa Testing Programs Comments on 2007-2008 Bar Coding

The district process for submitting student data for bar coding has been improved in many ways this year, resulting in much faster turn-around time for receipt of the printed bar code labels, and more accurate data. Districts can now submit their bar code files as

late as four weeks prior to the testing date. It is often advantageous for districts to wait to submit this information, due to ever-changing student enrollment. In an effort to help districts have data that is as accurate as possible, Iowa Testing Programs and the Department of Education have agreed that districts can submit partial orders for students who enroll after the bar code information has been processed. Instructions for the bar coding process, including how to submit partial orders, can be found online at <http://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/downloads.htm> in the document "Procedures for New Student Orders."

The information submitted in the bar code label ordering process will affect the quality of the data that is produced after testing. Time spent in ensuring the accuracy and completeness of data submitted for bar coding will allow bar code labels to be received more quickly, and will smooth the certification of testing data with the Department of Education.

Student Information System Study

The Statewide Student Information System Study required by HF 468 is underway. What that means is researchers from Parex Consulting Group will be seeking input from all school districts. Parex Consulting Group is an independent firm hired to gather objective information on the use of student information systems across the state. Please take the time to give them your input.

The study will use multiple methods to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from a variety of stakeholders. An online survey will be made available to district Project EASIER staff, superintendents or their designee, and information technology staff during the month of November. Likewise, a sample from these subpopulations will be invited to focus groups held at three sites around the state during the same month. Interviews will also be conducted with Department of Education Project EASIER staff and the student information system vendors.

This information will be helpful to the Department in informational technology planning and to the legislature so that whatever decisions they are making on these systems can be grounded in fact.

Questions or concerns regarding information in this Bulletin can be addressed to me at 515-281-7509 or coleen.mcclanahan@iowa.gov.

Thank you.

